(b) if so, whether Government are taking any action to deal with this problem;

(c) whether Government are also aware of the fact that the encroachment by human is considered main cause of the extinction of species of animals; and

(d) if so, the details of measures being taken by Government to prevent it in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) and (b) As per the information received from various State/Union Territory Governments, about 13.5 lakh hectare of forest land is under encroachment in the country. In compliance with the Supreme Court's Order, the Ministry of Environment and Forests have issued directions in May and October, 2002 to various State/UT Governments to evict the in-eligible encroachers from the forest lands in a time bound manner as per the guidelines issued in September, 1990 after consultation with the States. further, State/UT Government have been requested to monitor the eviction process at the highest level and to fix responsibility for inaction on the officials. As per the reports received from nine States/UTs, encroachments have been evicted from about 96000 hectare of forest land so far during last one year.

(c) and (d) Biotic pressure on forests increases with encroachment on forest lands. Though, encroachment may not be the direct and the main cause of extinction of animal species, however it certainly makes flora and fauna vulnerable for extinction. Government is committed to remove all ineligible encroachments from forest lands and protected area with the help of the State/UT Governments in accordance with the law.

Forest fire in Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh

3220. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA :
SHRI LALU PRASAD :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the large part of forests in Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh were affected by severe forest fire during this summer;

(b) whether Government propose to make a long term strategy to prevent recurrence of this loss of National property in future; and

(c) if so, by what method and by what time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) Some instances of forest fire have been reported from Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh. The total area affected by forest fire is reported to be 4750 ha. and 11776 ha. respectively in Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh. In both the States, the area affected by fire is less than 0.5% of the recorded forest area.

(b) and (c) The Ministry has already prepared a National Master Plan for forest fire control. Central assistance is available to States and Union Territories under Integrated Forest Protection Scheme which has a component of forest Fire Control and Management.

Sustainable forest management in Karnataka

3221. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Karnataka Government has sent a proposal titled "Sustainable Forest Management in Karnataka" seeking external assistance;

(b) if so, what is the total cost of the project;

(c) whether the Ministry has approved the proposal; and

(d) if not, what is the present position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The estimated total cost of the project is rupees 780 crores.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests have approved the proposal in principle and it has been included in the list of projects for seeking loan under Japan Overseas Development Assistance for the financial Year 2003 package. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation has conducted 'Fact Finding' of the project during May 2003.

Food parks in Uttaranchal

†3222. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.